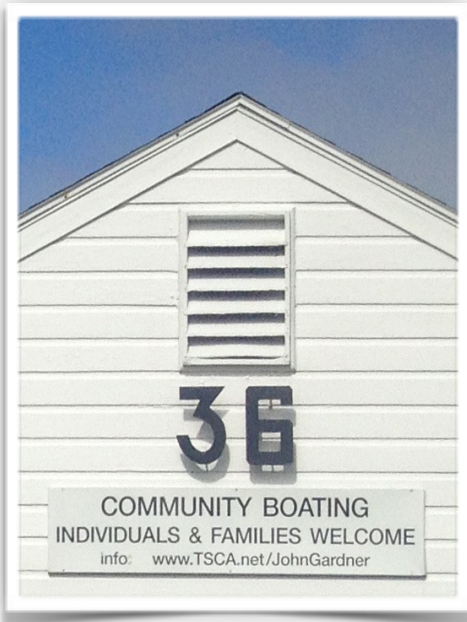


# JGTSCA

## John Gardner Chapter of Traditional Small Craft Association



### Welcome to John Gardner Traditional Small Craft Association.

Whether you have an interest in traditional boatbuilding, messing about in small boats, or helping to preserve our maritime heritage come join us and share the camaraderie of kindred minds.

We invite you to attend one of our meetings, go for a row, or get involved with our next boatbuilding project.

Feel free to contact any of our officers personally or stop by the Boathouse; we are often there Friday evenings.

The Community Boathouse is Building 36, at the University of Connecticut at Avery Point.

Visit us at [TSCA.net/JohnGardner](http://TSCA.net/JohnGardner) or on Facebook



Photo of Crawford Melonseed from "Small Craft Advisor"

## Traditional Boat of the Month - a Melonseed

Designed as a step up from a Sneakbox, the low riding Melonseed has a buoyant bow that will not scoop up waves when it gets a bit rough and are designed to sail the open bays rather than row. Sure, you can row a 'seed, but she will sail in a zephyr of a breeze. They are long for their width so look elegant with their lap strake hull and wine glass transom. Rather than other common 19th century duck hunting boats like Sneakboxes or Seaford skiffs, it is the Melonseed that is still commercially built. And beautiful wooden replicas are showing up at meets, as well.

They are fun to sail and have a dedicated following who show up at a moment's notice to race and party. They regularly participate in the annual Delaware River TSCA Meet at Union Lake in southern Jersey and have a great time competing for their own prizes and bragging rights but also participating in our traditional small craft activities. Their builder, Roger Crawford is famous for saying, "Growing old is mandatory, but growing up is optional".

Roger's Fiberglass versions sail a double sprit rig: a sprit for the peak and one for a boom, the sprit boom acts as a vang while riding a bit higher over our heads. A big advantage is loading up for home: all their spars fit inside their boats, making a nice neat package under a hull cover as they speed down the road.

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## Message from our President, Ellie Czarnowski:

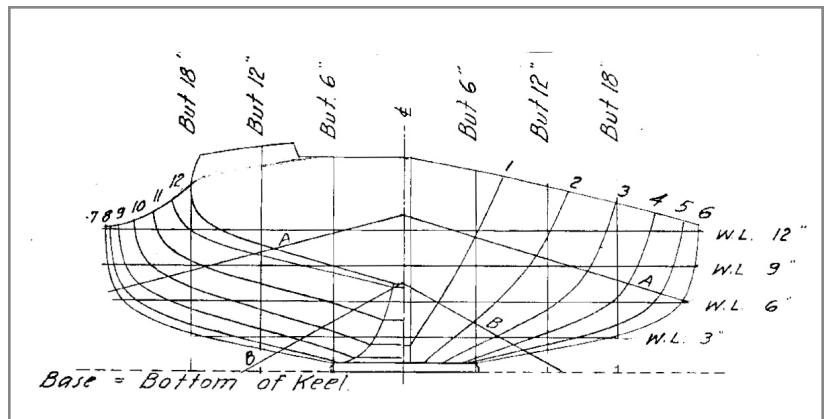
We look forward to working on the Nina and it's sail, and more activities together. The Pine Island clean up and BBQ will be 9 April with the UConn students. Our annual tag sale 6 June and in summer an adventure over to Bluff Point for an afternoon of boating and picnicking on the beach.

There are plans to row over to **Mamacoke Island** across from the Navy Sub Base with a hike around the island. We are looking forward to the competitive rowing races that members participate in and our annual year end party in December.

We will be planning for and organizing the **Pine Island cleanup with the UConn Marine Sciences class** during the March meeting. The cleanup will be Thursday April 9<sup>th</sup> about 11 o'clock. The club cooks up hamburgers and hotdogs for lunch afterwards. It is a big class this year, 24 students, so we could use help with the clean up on the island and cooking back at the club house. We partner with the UConn students to show our appreciation to the college for providing us with a unique workshop amongst the TSCA community.

Keep up with pictures of our activities and progress on the **Facebook** page hosted by John Hacunda.

Come on down to the work shop at UConn's Avery Point campus on Friday evenings and join the club members, all are welcome.



Lines from Chapelle's Melonseed of 1888

Other rigs on the homemade versions may have a laced on boom, but usually they retain the peak sprit. They rarely sail loose-footed since the clew of the sail extends pretty far aft. Regardless, they are fun to sail in high winds as well as low.

Most replicas as well as Roger Crawford's boats are built to Chapelle's "Melonseed of 1888" plans that he reportedly found unpublished in Forest & Stream's old files. Large scale drawings for this 13'-7" version are available from the Smithsonian. Maryland's Marc Barto drew two beautiful versions, one at 13'-6" and one at 16'-0", both available from WoodenBoat. The 16' version is quite fast; a competition has developed between a few from New Jersey and Dave Lucas' shade tree builders in Tampa, Florida.

Locally, Seaport boat builder Barry Thomas built one to Chapelle's lines in the '70's and describes sailing her in the 1974 Log of Mystic Seaport as "Strap her down and she just tears along." In 1974 Barry and New Jersey boat historian Wayne Yarnell measured a Melonseed in Northfield, NJ. At 13'-10" she is a shade longer than Chapelle's with a bit more dead rise and a straight keel. Her plans are available from the Seaport; ask for catalog number "Misc. 5". She has two sail plans: both leg-mutton without sprits and one with a club at the end of the boom. Sounds like a head-knocker to me.

The Melonseed's wide plank keel will land her upright when the tide goes out making her easy to beach or keep on an shallow out haul. Her curved scimitar shaped dagger board keeps the cockpit free. A wide fore deck keeps out the water and provides a place to stow your decoys, or picnic basket, as the case may be. A fun boat for a solo sail, easy to trailer launch and retrieve, or a quiet boat for an evening sunset sail with a significant other. Think about planting some 'seeds.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mr. Cleat

## Around the Shops:

At **Avery Point Community Boathouse**, "Nina", John Atkin's 11'-4" cat rigged flat bottom skiff is progressing nicely. Rob Pittaway (see photo) rounded off the transom with drawknife and wooden block plane, all very traditional. Builder Leader George Spragg and Andy Strode fit the mast thwart, seat thwarts and mast step, all to be finished bright mahogany. Should look nice. Meanwhile the interior looks like a porcupine with copper nails poking through the plank laps awaiting the Friday night crew to trim them and peen the nail ends over washers.



In **Home Shops**: Peter Vermilya has cut out the molds and keel for his Delaware Ducker to match the stems cut as reported in our last issue. He is strongly contemplating covering his lofting with a boat a-building. Either that or adding a floor to his shop for lofting. Too much snow for that...



At the **Seaport Boat Shop**, Jim McGuire and his team of volunteers are repaying the seams on "Mary", a flat bottomed skiff, getting ready to paint for the coming season. Also in the Boathouse Shop is the Seaford skiff, "Helen Packer" (see photo), a second cousin to our featured Melonseed. Note the long, straight plank keel; Melonseeds usually had theirs tucked up with a skeg aft. Instead, this Seaford skiff from Amityville on Long Island's Great South Bay has her garboards bent down to form a box keel similar to a Sea Bright Skiff. "Helen" was built for the Livery at Mystic in 1996 to replace a Ketchum skiff being acquisitioned. She was named for Helen Packer, long time secretary who helped the Boatshop and handled the sale of boat plans.

Meanwhile in the **John Gardner Boatshop** across the way, Jim has the team of Ed Rothman (see photo) and Ted Stanton re fastening the bottom of Beetle Cat "Lisa". They are painstakingly removing old fastenings and replacing with silicon bronze, including interior butt blocks. Must be ready for the Tuesday night races come spring.



John Gardner Chapter TSCA  
UCONN Avery Point Club House  
Regular Business Meeting  
February 6, 2015  
Draft Minutes

JGTSCA President Ellie Czarnowski was in the Chair. She called the Meeting to order at 5:55pm.

**1. Introduction of Members**

Ellie Czarnowski, Peter Vermilya, John Symons, George Spragg, Andy Strode, John Hacunda, Bill Armitage, Phil Behney, Rob Pittaway and Jim Clark were present.

Ellie thanked Karen and Bill Rutherford for publishing the Club's new monthly news Letter.

**2. Minutes from January 02, 2014 meeting**

The Minutes for the 11/02/2014 Meeting, as published on the JGTSCA Website, were discussed extremely briefly.

**3. Next Meeting**

The next Business meeting will be **SUNDAY March 01, 2015 at 1:30pm** at the Avery Point Club House. The meeting will be combined with a potluck lunch.

Spring maintenance work will be done on one of the Club dories **starting at 12:30** prior to the meeting and will resume again after the meeting. Phil Behney and John Symons will deliver the dory, weather permitting.

**4. The Fleet**

Between now and the March meeting, Bill Armitage will remove the foot stretchers now in place in the SUSAN B HOLLAND and will install new stretchers of his own design. He will do whatever paint repair is necessary. John Symons will apply vinyl letters spelling out her name. The boat will then be stored on the racks in the west end of the building until she is next used.

The club dory "Jane", built with A/C plywood, is in rough shape and not worthy of restoration. It was the consensus of the meeting that she be sold, but not until the club has built a replacement, as the club should keep four dories on hand. George Spragg and Ellie Czarnowski will repair a window pane in the Club's Mystic Shipyard East storage building.

Bill Armitage asked that he and a friend be allowed to use the SUSAN B HOLLAND for a 5 to 8 day rowing trip. Members present were enthusiastically in favor.

Bill also asked for suggestions for a suitable location for the trip. The Maine Island Trail, the Hudson River, Lake Champlain and the Quabbin Reservoir were suggested. They are looking for a loop trip – start and end at the same location.

**5. Treasurer's Report**

John Symons reported a beginning bank balance for 2015 of \$4097.00. Since then Income has been \$104.00 and Expenses 134.79, for an ending Bank balance to date of \$4,097. A complete report will be published on the club's website.

Ellie Czarnowski will purchase a zip drive for use by the Club Treasurer.

John Symons and Ellie will arrange for Ellie to be a co-signee for the Club's bank account this week.

**6. Club House Queue**

John Symons is the next person in line to use the club house for a private member project. Dory maintenance will take priority, however.

**7. NINA**

Members present discussed whether to use oil or paint on the boat's interior. Four of the ten members then present voted 3:1 to oil the interior. Subsequent discussion, however, led to a sense of the meeting that the decision will be made after an attempt is made to remove the black magic marker lettering now on the inside of the planking. George Spragg volunteered to remove the lettering.

The exterior will be painted. After a year of use, the club will decide to sell or retain the boat.

## 8. Annual Dinner at the Custom House Museum

Ellie called for suggestions for a speaker for the December 2015 dinner.

One suggestion was that the director of the Custom House Museum might be persuaded to give her presentation on local light houses.

A docent-led tour of one of the Museum's rooms was also suggested.

## 9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Vermilya, JGTSCA Secretary

## View from the Side Deck:

Standing on the Deck, looking out towards the mighty Thames, I can barely see the water for the piles of snow. Not the 99 inches Boston has received, but plenty for Connecticut. The University front end loaders have been busy piling it higher and deeper. I offered to help Rob across the slippery spots from the Boathouse and we both fell laughing into a snow bank. Spring cannot come soon enough.

I attended the Mystic Small Ships Modelers meeting on Saturday. What a great group! Eclectic. Radio Control (R/C) racers, historical static ships and operating models. The club project is underway: a working R/C 45" model of the Tug "Kingston", yes, the big red one guarding the entrance to the Seaport's South Gate. This active group usually meets the third Saturday of the month in Campbell classroom in the basement of the Planetarium. Upcoming activities include a R/C Demo the Weekend before the WoodenBoat Show, June 20th, a July Model Making Demo, a booth at the Engine Show in August, as well as a barbecue in September. The goal of the group is to promote modeling at the Seaport. There are over 2000 models in the Seaport collection! Remember when the 3rd floor of Stillman was all models? Perhaps a few could be brought out to the second floor now alongside the relocated Packard Deckhouse exhibit? Join this group; contact Bob Andrie at [smallyachtsailor@gmail.com](mailto:smallyachtsailor@gmail.com) and come join the fun. Next meeting March 28th at 10 am in Campbell. A Seaport Membership gets you in.



Lest you think Modeling archaic, check out this very detailed, right down to the bolts on the winch handle, anchor winch Hans Berger made with a very high tech 3D printer. (See photo) Each part is printed separately so the winch, when assembled, operates! Amazing. What a resource as we fumble through our own modeling exercises. Pick out your favorite boat or ship and entertain these long winter nights.

### Meanwhile, forget not other upcoming activities:

**The Catboat Association** meets at the Mystic Marriott March 6th to 8th.

The **Maine Boatbuilder's Show** in Portland March 20th through March 22nd.

Register for the Maine **TSCA's Small Reach Regatta** by March 27th.

Our own **TSCA Meet at the WoodenBoat Show** June 26th through 28th.

**Meanwhile, come to our next meeting, Sunday, March 1st at 1:30 pm at the Community Boathouse, Building 36, when our program will be Ted Stanton introducing us to his model of the Catboat "Breck Marshall" and sharing with us his experiences giving museum visitors rides on in the Mystic River.**

Remember **Fridays at 6:30 pm or Wednesdays at 10 am** to work on "Nina". All at the Community Boathouse, UCONN Building 36 at Avery Point.

Fair (Warm) Winds, Bill Rutherford

# 2015 Calendar

## March

**Sunday 01, 1:30pm:**

Business Meeting & Pot Luck

## April

**Friday 03, 5:30pm:**

Business Meeting & Pot Luck

**Thursday, April 9, 11am:**

Pine Island Cleanup

## May

**Friday 01, 5:30pm:**

Business Meeting & Pot Luck

## June

**Friday 05, 5:30pm:** Business Meeting & Pot Luck & Preparation for Annual Tag Sale

**Sat. 06, 8am-12 noon:**

Annual Tag Sale

**Friday 26 - Sunday 28:** TSCA Meet @  
Wooden Boat Show

## July

**Sunday 05:** Possible picnic at Bluff Point

## August

**Sunday 02,** Scheduling tentative.

## Sept

**Sunday 06, 1:30pm:** Business Meeting & Pot Luck

## October

**Friday 02, 5:30pm:** Business Meeting & Pot Luck

## November

**Friday 06, 5:30pm:** Business Meeting & Pot Luck

## December

**Sunday 06, 1pm:** Annual Banquet & Business Meeting